



Telluride Valley Floor

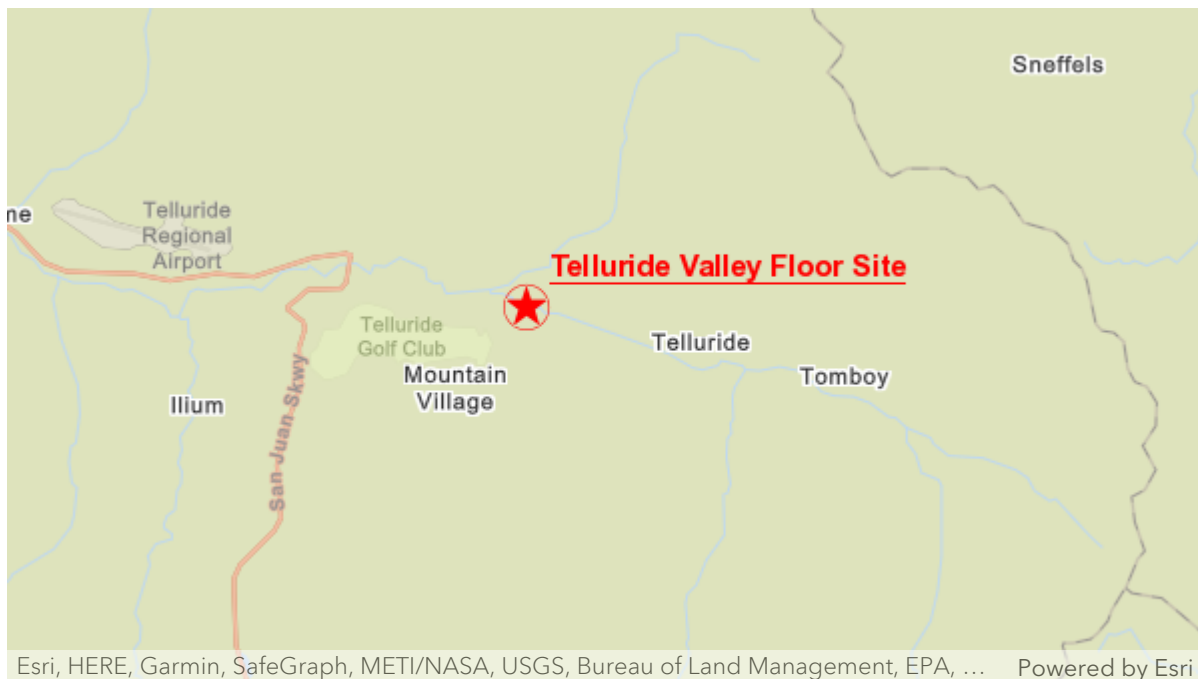
Telluride Valley Floor

A U.S. EPA Region 8 Story Map

September 16, 2021

Overview

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in conjunction with U.S. Forest Service, is conducting a joint Removal Action at the Telluride Valley Floor Site, which is located in Telluride, CO.



Site Location Map

EPA is the lead agency conducting the cleanup and has assigned Federal On-Scene Coordinator, Joni Sandoval, to oversee field activities. The Removal Action will be conducted in 2 phases. Phase 1 was an Emergency Response to stabilize eroding tailings in the San Miguel River, as well as provide dust and erosion control in an area closed off by signage containing mill tailings, that is frequently trespassed by bikers and trail passers. Phase 1 was conducted in November 2020. The Phase 2 Time Critical Removal Action is being conducted to mitigate the remaining tailings that pose a threat to human health and the environment and is currently underway.

This Story Map will provide an up to date summary of work progress during the Phase 2 Time Critical Removal Action.



Background

Phase 1

The Site is mixed ownership (small area of Town Property with

mostly Federal lands) and was referred to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), due to resource and budgeting constraints in Fall of 2020. The EPA attended a Site Visit with the USFS, Town of Telluride, and Trout Unlimited to conduct a visual Site Evaluation, as well as gain familiarity with the assessment done by the USFS in prior years. Tailings were visibly sloughing off into the San Miguel River and being stirred up by bikers and trail users who did not heed warning signs along the River. The OSC personally observed multiple recreators passing through the area in a short time, including a gentleman with a baby in a bicycle seat on a bike riding through tailings. The tailings contain high levels of lead on average between 2,000-10,000 ppm, although some areas contain levels up to 100,000 ppm. Arsenic is also above the acceptable exposure limits.



Site Layout

Actions completed as part of Phase 1 included:

- Installation of erosion controls to mitigate runoff from the excavation and stockpile operations.
- Removed up to 3,000 cubic yards of tailing and stabilized/armored bank area.

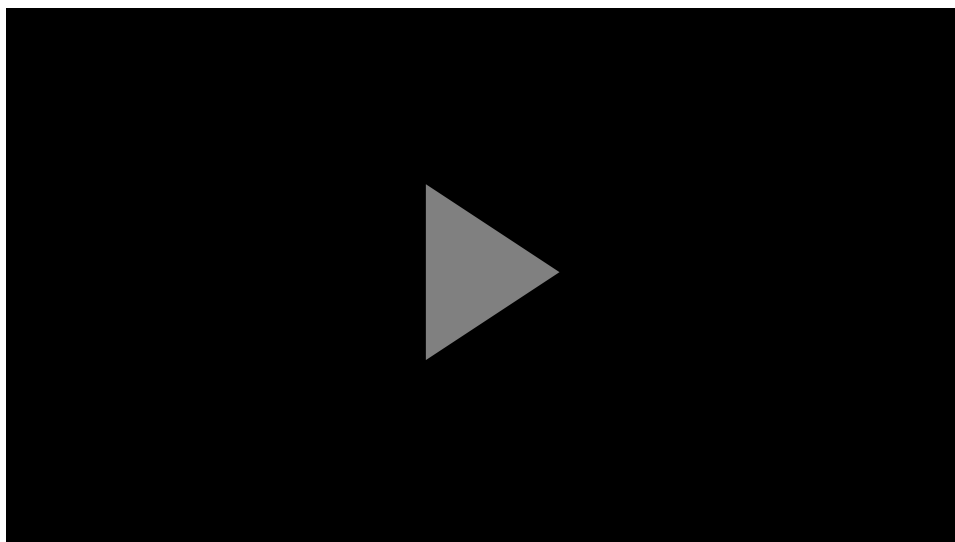
- Installed a low water crossing for moving equipment and material.
- Stabilized hike/bike area by placing a thin cap of gravel over the tailings.
- Placed barriers around contaminated areas, until mitigated or cleaned up.
- Hauled excavated contaminated material to state-designated, responsible party-owned on-site repository.



Completed North Riverbank Lining and Arm



Installed Drainage Controls



Overview of Activities at TVF Boomerang Road Site

Phase 2

Site objectives of Phase 2 include:

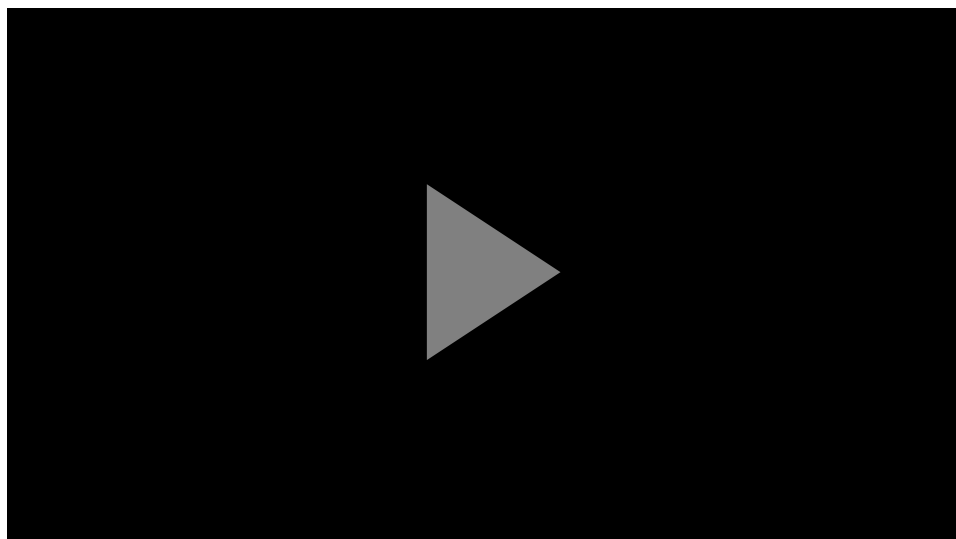
- Protect human health and the environment by performing a Time-Critical Removal Action of old mill tailings containing high levels of lead and arsenic.
- Health and Safety of the public and workers on-site.
- Communication with stakeholders including the community.

- Keep open recreational trails by rerouting trails around the work zone.
- Ensure dust suppression is performed with water trucks on-site to mitigate exposure to human health and the environment, as well as ensure there are no off-site impacts such as wind migration.
- Safely transport and unload tailings at the repository for consolidation, treatment, and ongoing storage at the state permitted and regulated Colorado tailings piles 5/6.
- Ensure no contamination is tracked off site of the Valley Floor or Repository.
- Provide air sampling and particulate monitoring upwind, in Town, and on-site at the repository to ensure there are no airborne tailings during transport.
- Restore the river and Valley Floor back to its original conditions.

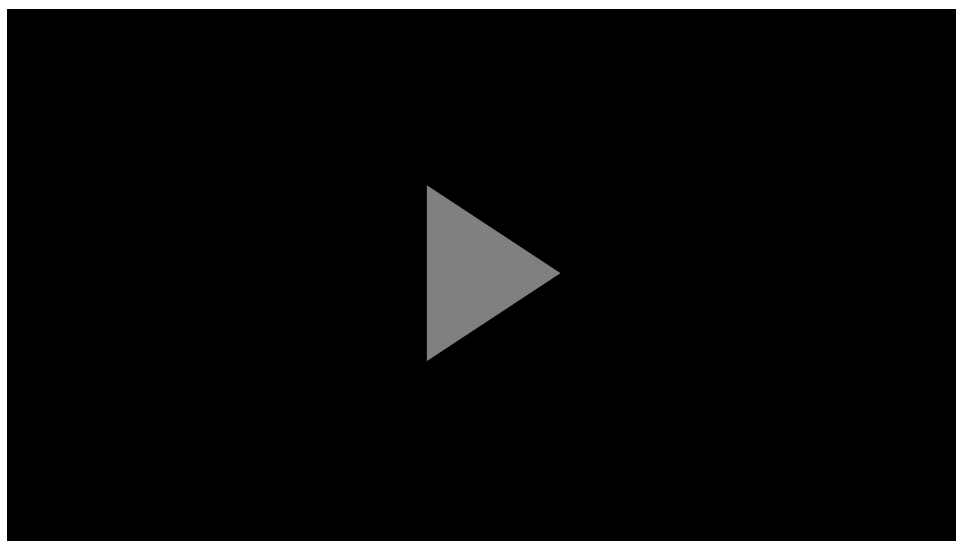
To view an overview of activities that are expected to be completed onsite, please watch the videos below.



TVF Boomerang Road Removal action



TVF Boomerang Road Removal Plan Updates Based on Community Feedback



Telluride Valley Floor/Boomerang Road Time-Sensitive Removal Action August Update



Operational Objectives

The objectives during this operational period (09/06/21 - 09/12/21) were as follows;

1. Monitored and controlled recreational traffic around the work zone.
2. Kept stakeholders informed of EPA removal actions.
3. Created and emphasized a safe and efficient work zone for EPA crews.

4. Continued to excavate tailings in area ST1 and haul to repository.
5. Continued to excavate tailings in area ST2 and haul to repository.
6. Begin excavation in NTN and NT1
7. Conducted air sampling and particulate monitoring on-site and in the community.
8. Ensured daily data management functions are up to date to ensure accurate website reporting.
9. Back fill excavated areas of ST1 and ST2 with clean soil.



Current Activities

During the Current Operational Period, the weather was in the mid-70s with clear skies. The total volume excavated by area is available on the Truck Load Dashboard below. The Team completed the following activities during this operational period:

- Maintained additional site security measures to prevent the public from entering the exclusion zone.
- Additional investigatory areas of tailings were screened and evaluated for potential removal on the Site footprint. Tailings areas were redefined and expanded and are available on the Map Viewer.
- Continued excavation/hauling in location ST1.
- Continued excavation/hauling in location ST2.
- Deployed air sampling and monitoring locations along the trucking route to capture background levels and assess any potential impacts of EPA trucking operations for dust and airborne contamination. Sample results and real-time data can be found on the Telluride Valley Floor Site Update page.
- Updated the Telluride Valley Floor Site Update page with photographs depicting the removal activities to date.
- **Posted unmanned aerial surveillance footage on the Telluride Valley Floor Site Update page, which depicts an**

overview of the removal operations.

- Worked with the Town to establish regular maintenance of the beaver dam and cleared obstructions from the drains running under Boomerang Road, mitigating issues from the water backup.
- Continued development of stream restoration plans to return the river to a more natural state.



Eastward view of a fully loaded dump truck from ST1 leaving the site to deposit tailings at the Idarado repository.



Backfill operations have begun in the western portion of ST1 Central, the excavated tailings are being replaced with clean soil.

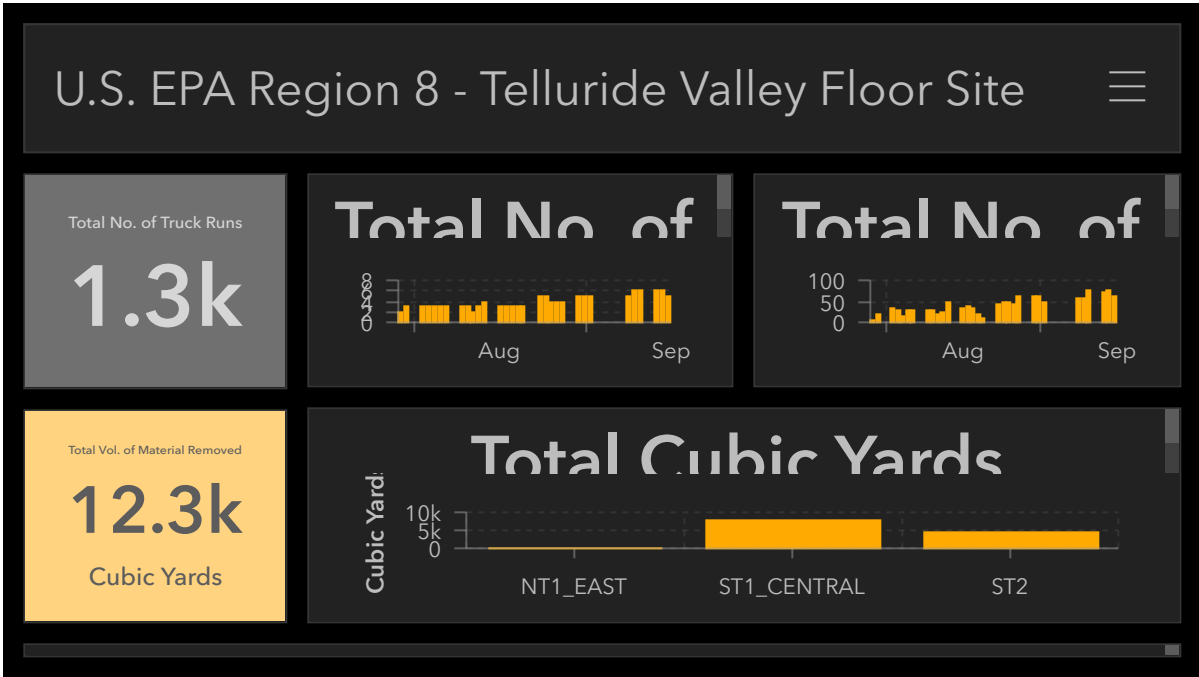


Air monitoring station three located near the entrance of the repository where contaminated soil is being dumped. Here you can see a haul truck after dropping off a load.

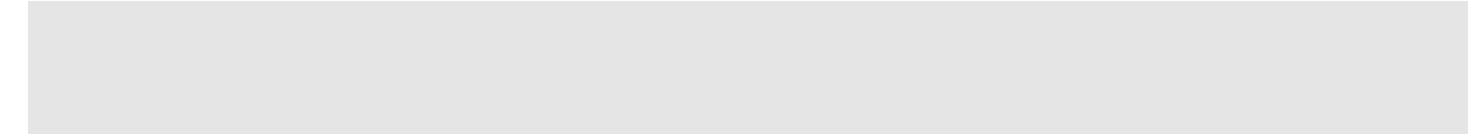


A western view of the San Miguel River Trail temporary re-route. The trail has been re-routed during operations to ensure the safety of the trail users.

A summary providing on overview of vehicle traffic and material transported to the repository is included below.

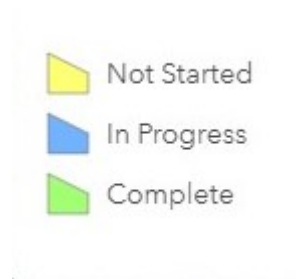


Truck Load Dashboard





Excavation progress from the tailings piles is displayed here. The tailings areas are depicted in yellow to indicate that excavation progress has not yet started, blue to indicate that excavation is in progress, and green indicates it is complete.



Safety Issues

EPA will adhere to all CDC and local recommendations pertaining to COVID-19 during the site work.

EPA will adhere to all construction and hazardous substance safety best management practices.

EPA and contractor crews will adhere to dedicated speed limits for all EPA truck traffic through town, monitor any potential community impacts and redirect recreators outside the exclusion zone.

EPA will monitor potential impacts to site operations and worker

health and safety from increased particulate matter from wildfire smoke.

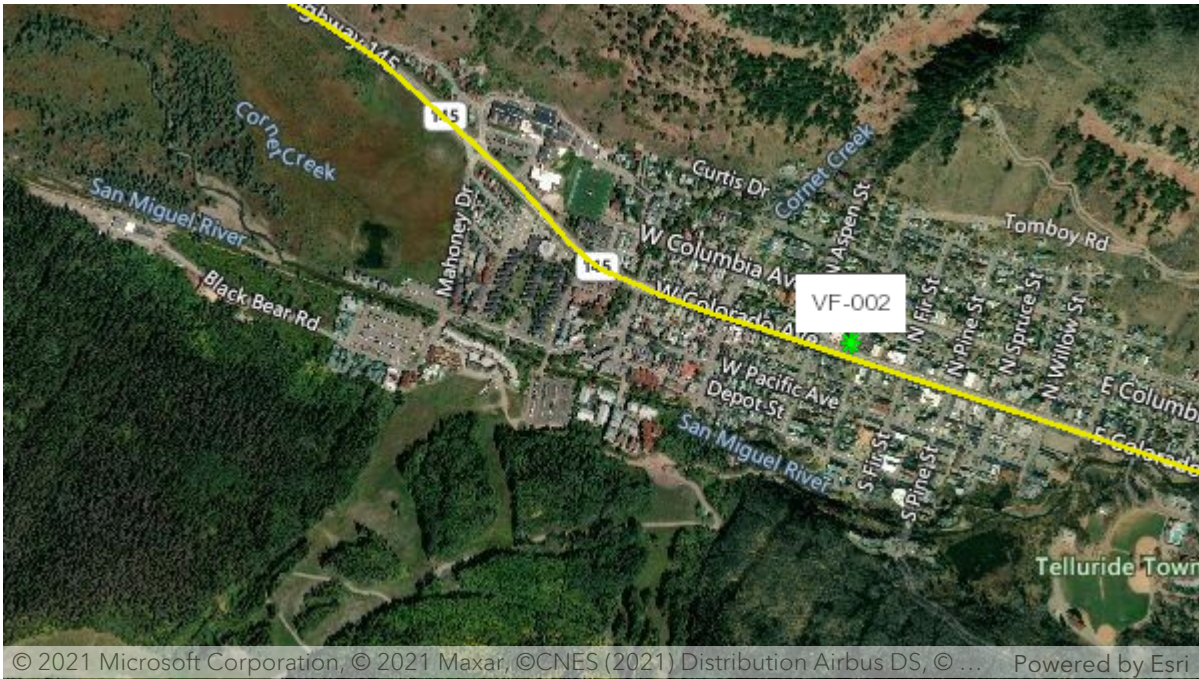
A safety stand down will occur for 30 minutes if lightning strikes near the work site.



Planned Activities

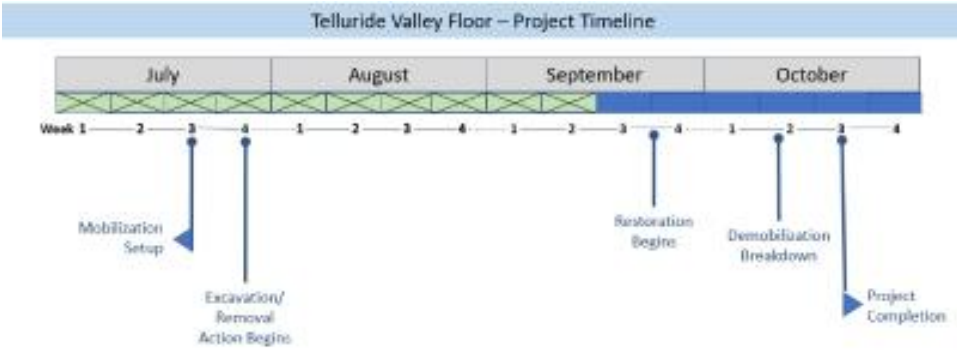
For the next Operational Period, September 13th thru September 19th 2021, the EPA Site Team Plans to:

1. Keep stakeholders informed of EPA removal actions.
2. Continue to create a safe and efficient work zone for EPA crews.
3. Complete excavation of tailings in ST1 Central and haul to repository.
4. Complete excavation of tailings in ST2 and haul to repository.
5. Begin excavation of tailings in NTN and NT1 East and haul to repository.
6. Conduct air monitoring and sampling.
7. Ensure daily data management functions are up to date to ensure accurate website reporting.
8. Stockpile clean fill material.
9. Backfill excavated areas of ST1 and ST2 with clean soil.
10. Build a temporary berm between the San Miguel River and ST2.
11. Continue to right-size crew and equipment to meet response action timelines.
12. Continue to monitor water situation on the east side of Boomerang Road and coordinate with Town officials accordingly.



Work Areas, Air Monitoring, and Vehicle Route

Timeline



NOTE: Timeline may change due to weather and/or other constraints.

Map Viewer

A map viewer can be accessed by clicking the button below.

[Map Viewer](#)

More Information

Archived StoryMaps from previous operational periods can be found on the Documents Section of the EPA website.

[Archived Story Maps](#)

More information can be found on the EPA website. Please click the button below to connect to the EPA website.

[EPA Website](#)